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PROGRAMME BUDGET FOR THE BIENNIUM 1992-1993

DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

Programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.75

Statement submitted by the Secretary-General in accordance with rule 153 of the rules of procedure of the General Assembly

1. At its 51st meeting, held on 16 December 1992, the Second Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.75 without a vote. A statement of programme budget implications was before the Committee in document A/C.2/47/L.89.

A. Requests contained in the draft resolution

2. Under the terms of operative paragraphs 1, 4, 7, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 19, 20 and 21 of draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.75, the General Assembly would:

(a) Decide to convene a United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II) from 3 to 14 June 1996, at the highest possible level of participation;

(b) Decide to establish a Preparatory Committee of the General Assembly open to all States Members of the United Nations and of the specialized agencies, with the participation of observers in accordance with the established practice of the General Assembly;

(c) Decide that the Preparatory Committee shall hold an organizational session of three days' duration in March 1993 and that two preparatory sessions should be held, the first in early 1994 in Geneva or New York and the second in conjunction with the 1995 session of the Commission on Human Settlements, with detailed arrangements for the preparatory discussions to be determined at the organizational session;

(d) Decide that in the event of there being a clear need for further preparatory discussions, an appropriate request might be made by the Preparatory Committee of the Conference to the General Assembly;

(e) Note with appreciation the generous offer made by the Government of Turkey to act as host for the Conference, and decide that the Conference would be held in Turkey in 1996;

(f) Request the Secretary-General, following the organizational session of the Preparatory Committee, in accordance with resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, to establish through redeployment, to the maximum extent possible and within existing resources, an ad hoc secretariat for the Conference, which should be organizationally part of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat);

(g) Decide that the ad hoc secretariat will be headed by a Secretary-General of the Conference to be appointed by the Secretary-General of the United Nations;

(h) Request the Secretary-General of the United Nations to prepare a report for the organizational session of the Preparatory Committee, containing recommendations on an adequate preparatory process, taking into account the provisions of the draft resolution and the views expressed by Governments in the discussion of that matter at the forty-seventh session of the General Assembly;

(i) Recommend that regional and subregional preparatory meetings should be held in conjunction with meetings of subregional and regional intergovernmental bodies, wherever possible;

(j) Decide that the preparatory process and the Conference itself should be funded through existing United Nations budgetary resources, without negatively affecting its programmed activities, and through voluntary contributions to a trust fund established specifically for the purpose of funding the preparatory process and the Conference;

(k) Decide to establish a separate voluntary fund for the purpose of supporting developing countries, in particular the least developed among them, in participating fully and effectively in the Conference and in its preparatory process, and invite Governments to contribute to the fund.

B. Activities by which the proposed requests would be implemented

3. The activities proposed in the draft resolution are related to programme 22, Human settlements, of the medium-term plan for the period 1992-1997, as revised (A/47/6 (Prog. 22)), and to section 19, United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat), of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993. 1/ They have not been included in the medium-term plan, nor has a provision been made under the programme budget in relation to these activities.

4. Should the General Assembly adopt the draft resolution, a Preparatory Committee of the General Assembly would be established, as an exception to the provision of General Assembly resolution 35/10 C of 3 November 1980, by which the Assembly decided that preparatory committees should be established for special conferences only if that function could not be appropriately performed by an existing intergovernmental organ. The organizational session of the Preparatory Committee would be convened in March 1993 at United Nations Headquarters. Two substantive sessions would also be held during 1994 and 1995. The venue, timing and duration of these meetings would be determined by the Preparatory Committee at its organizational session. Also, regional preparatory meetings would take place in 1994 and 1995 in conjunction with the meetings of regional intergovernmental bodies.

5. It should be noted that the holding of the organizational session of the Preparatory Committee in New York or the substantive sessions of the Committee away from the established headquarters of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) would constitute an exception to the arrangements established by the General Assembly in its resolution 40/243 of 18 December 1985.

6. Public information activities would be directed at creating public awareness and at sensitizing public opinion at both the national and the international levels to the goals of the Conference. The focus during 1993 would be the preparation and dissemination in English, French and Spanish of a newsletter to the media and non-governmental organizations. Two issues of the newsletter would be produced in 1993. Also during 1993, a pre-conference illustrated brochure would be produced and disseminated in 50,000 copies in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish.

7. The activities called for in the draft resolution would require the revision of the programme narrative under section 19 by insertion of the following new paragraph 19.5:

> "19.5. In 1993 preparations will be made for the Habitat II Conference to be held in 1996. Substantive support will be provided to the Preparatory Committee at its organizational session in March 1993."

C. Estimate of resource requirements

8. In order to carry out the core activities detailed in paragraph 2 above, resource requirements for the preparatory process and the Conference will have to be met over a period of three programme budgets covering the bienniums 1992-1993, 1994-1995 and 1996-1997. On the assumption that arrangements for the preparatory process and the Conference itself would be similar to those for other conferences previously approved by the General Assembly, it is estimated that the overall costs of the Conference would be in the range of $2 million to $2.5 million for substantive and public information activities and some $3 million for the conference-servicing requirements at full cost.

9. In keeping with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 35/10 C, by which the Assembly decided that the secretariats for special conferences should, to the extent possible, be provided by existing secretariat machinery with such temporary strengthening as may be necessary, the preparations for the Conference would be carried out by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) through internal redeployment of available resources to the maximum extent possible. However, based on a review of the resources available for such redeployment, it is estimated that in the course of 1993 additional resources would be needed, as follows:

(a) Seven work-months of general temporary assistance at the D-1 level for the period June to December 1993 ($70,500). The officer at the D-1 level would be assigned to the Office of the Executive Director of the Centre at Nairobi, to manage the preparatory process of the Conference. That officer would assume, in particular, responsibility for the coordination of substantive activities;

(b) Owing to the complexity and diversity of the issues to be addressed by the Conference, five work-months of consultancy services at the P-5 level would be required for 1993 for the preparation of reports and background papers to be submitted to the Preparatory Committee at its substantive session in 1994 ($40,000);

(c) A provision of $59,400 for travel and subsistence allowance of staff. Of this amount, $34,500 would be required in order to enable staff from the Centre at Nairobi to travel to New York and provide substantive support to the Preparatory Committee at its organizational session. The remaining amount ($24,900) would enable representatives of the five regional commissions to participate in that same session;

(d) $12,200 for travel for the observers who have received standing invitations to participate in the United Nations meetings and conferences under the terms of General Assembly resolution 3280 (XXIX) of 10 December 1974;

(e) $15,000 to meet the increased communications costs which would arise in connection with the preparatory process;

(f) $50,000 for public information activities, as indicated in paragraph 6 above.

10. With regard to the conference-servicing requirements, it is estimated that the full cost of the three-day organizational session of the Preparatory Committee to be held in New York in March 1993 would amount to $118,400 (see the annex to the present statement for the breakdown of this amount).

11. The above-mentioned requirements are summarized as follows:

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General temporary assistance	70 500
Consultants	40 000
Travel of staff	59 400
Travel of representatives	12 200
Communications	15 000
Public information	50 000
Subtotal	247 100
Conference servicing at full cost	118 400
Total	365 500

12. The estimated conference-servicing cost of $118,400 for 1993 is based on the theoretical assumption that no part of the requirements would be met from within the permanent conference-servicing capacity under section 41, Administration and management, of the programme budget and that additional resources would be required for temporary assistance for meetings. However, as indicated in paragraph 32.4 of the programme budget, 2/ the 1992-1993 level of resources for temporary assistance for meetings was estimated on the basis of previous experience so that it can accommodate not only meetings known at the time of budget preparation but also for additional meetings, provided that the number and distribution of meetings and conferences in the biennium 1992-1993 is consistent with the pattern of meetings in past years. On that basis, it is estimated that no additional resources would be required under section 41 of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993.

13. Pursuant to operative paragraphs 20 and 21 of the draft resolution, the Secretary-General would establish two trust funds, one for financing additional activities required for the preparation and holding of the Conference and the other for financing the participation of the least developed countries in the preparatory process and the Conference itself.

14. Requirements under the regular budget for the years 1994 and 1995 would be considered in the context of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 1994-1995 and in the light of the results of the organizational session of the Preparatory Committee.

15. Under the terms of operative paragraph 10, the Conference would be held in Turkey in 1996 on the understanding that, in accordance with the provisions of General Assembly resolution 40/243, any additional costs incurred by the United Nations for holding a conference away from its established United Nations headquarters would be borne by the host country.

D. Contingency fund

16. It will be recalled that, under the procedure established by the General Assembly in its resolution 41/213, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the proposed programme budget. Under the same procedure, if additional expenditures are proposed that exceed resources available within the contingency fund, those activities can be implemented only through redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or modifications of projected activities. Otherwise, such additional activities will have to be deferred.

17. No activity has been identified for termination, deferral, curtailment or modification under section 19 of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993. Should it not prove possible to meet the above-mentioned requirements from the contingency fund, the implementation of activities requested in draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.75 would have to be deferred, as provided for in the guidelines for the use of the contingency fund adopted by the General Assembly in its resolution 42/211.

E. Summary

18. Should the General Assembly adopt draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.75, the narrative of the programme of work indicated in paragraph 7 above would be added under section 19 of the programme budget for the biennium 1992-1993. An additional appropriation in the amount of $247,100 would be required for 1993 under the same section. In addition, an amount of $20,200 would be required under section 36, Staff assessment, to be offset by an increase in the same amount under income section 1, Income from staff assessment.

Notes

1/ Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-sixth Session, Supplement No. 6 (A/46/6/Rev.1), vol. I.

2/ Ibid., vol. II.

Annex

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Pre-session documentation (50 pages, 3 documents, A,C,E,F,R,S)	51 500
Meeting servicing (Interpretation: A,C,E,F,R,S)	34 900
In-session documentation (20 pages, 2 documents, A,C,E,F,R,S)	21 200
Post-session documentation (10 pages, 1 document, A,C,E,F,R,S)	10 800
Total	118 400